THE DAILY STAR

THE GHOST ROBBER.

On a fine evening in the spring of 1830, a stranger, mounted on a noble-looking horse, passed slowly over the snow-white limestone road leading through the Black Forest in Baden, from the village of Glasherete to Naustadt, some thirty miles distant.

Although the horse champed his bit, tossed his head proudly, and showed by the nervous, quick flashing of his clear, bold eye, that he was more than anxious to quicken his pace, his master held him to a slow walk, and occasionally tried to soothe his impatience by patting him upon the neck, while he spoke to him as affectionately as he would address a child.

Just as the sun was going to rest for the day, and when gloomy shadows were beginning to stalk forth from every part of the wood, the stranger found himself within a few rods of an old-fashioned, dilapidated building, standing all alone by the roadside, and bearing a weather-beaten sign-board, upon which were scrawled the words, "Gasthaus zum Aiersch" (Deer Hotel), he dismounted and entered the parlor of the inn, where he sat down before a small table. He had no sooner taken his seat than the landlord made his appearance, with what was intended to be a bland smile upon his countenance, but which ended in a half-grin.

"How can I serve you, meinheer?"

"See to my horse outside," replied his guest, carelessly, but at the same time eyeing the landlord from head to foot, "and let me have some wine—Rhine will do."

The horse was attended to and the wine furnished. The landlord was turning to withdraw from the stranger's presence, when he stopped and said:

"Which way, meinheer, do you travel?"

"To Naustadt," replied his guest.

"You will rest here to-night, I suppose," continued the landlord.

"I will stay here for two or three hours, but I must then be off so as to reach my destination in the morning. I am going there to purchase lumber for the market."

"And you have considerable money with you, no doubt?" added the landlord, innocently.

"Yes, considerable," replied his guest, sipping at his wine disinterestedly.

"Then, if you'll take my advice," said the landlord, "you'll remain here till morning."

"Why?" queried the stranger, looking up half curiously.

"Because every man who has passed over the road between this and Naustadt at night, for this last ten years, has been robbed or murdered under very singular circumstances."

"What were the singular circumstances?" asked the stranger, laying down his glass empty, and preparing to fill it again.

"Why, you see," the landlord went on, while he approached the guest's table and took a seat, "I have spoken with several who have been robbed, and all I could learn from them is that they remember meeting in the lonesomest part of the wood a something which looked white and ghastly, and frightened their horses, so that they either ran away or threw their riders; after that all was confusion with them; they felt a choking sensation and sort of smothering, and finally died, as they thought, but awoke in an hour or so to find themselves lying by the roadside, robbed of everything."

"Indeed!" ejaculated the stranger, looking abstractedly at the rafters in the ceiling, as though he were more intent on counting them than he was interested in the landlord's story.

The inn-keeper looked at him in amazement. Such perfect coolness he had not witnessed in a long time.

"You will remain then?" suggested the landlord, after waiting some time for his guest to speak.

"Me?" cried the stranger, starting from his fit of abstraction as though he were not sure that he was the party addressed. "Oh, most certainly not; I am going straight ahead, ghost or no ghost, to-night."

"You will need a guide then; it's a dark night, and always dark, you know, in the Black Forest."

"Very well," said the stranger, "if you can furnish me with one I'll pay him what he wants, provided he's reasonable."

"You shall have my son, Wilhelm," responded the landlord, with an attempt at making a show of pride as he mentioned that worthy's name, "and a brighter lad never crossed a saddle. Why, sir, there is scarcely a tree in this old forest that he does not know, nor a path that he can not tell exactly where it leads to."

"Have him ready, then," interrupted the stranger, "at 11 to-night. In the meantime I will rest if you show me to a room."

When the stranger found himself alone, instead of going to bed, he took from his breast pocket a heavy double-barreled pistol, examined the priming, and, being satisfied with it, put the weapon back, after which he paced up and down the room with his head bent upon his breast, and eyes fastened upon the door.

A half an hour later, the stranger and his guide, Wilhelm, were out on the road, going at a pretty round pace toward Naustadt. The moon had disappeared within a large black cloud which came sweeping up from the south like an immense army, leaving the great forest wrapped in pitchy darkness. A fresh wind swept sweeping through the trees, and the screech-owl threw in his horrid shrieks as a chorus to the dirge it made. It was not without considerable difficulty that they succeeded in keeping the road. Thus they rode on for about two miles, when the stranger, observing that his guide had left what he considered the main road, called out, as he slackened his pace: "Hallo! my friend, havn't we left the main road?"

"Yes, meinheer," was the reply.

"Why," demanded the first speaker, bringing his horse to a full stop. "This road is narrow, as dark as the bottomless pit, and so completely filled in with trees that I should take it to be a chosen place for assassins and robbers."

"It is the shortest route, meinheer," responded the guide, following the movement of the stranger by reining in his steed.

"Umph!" ejaculated the stranger, with just a touch of suspicicion in the exclamation; "proceed then!"

On they again started, while now and then the forked tongues of the lightning would penetrate the gloom which hung around them, disclosing a lonely and unfrequented-looking road. During one of those flashes the stranger observed that his guide looked very uneasy about something, and was slackening his horse's pace, as though he intended to drop behind.

"Lead on," cried the stranger; "don't be afraid. If anything happens, I'm close to your heels, and well armed."

"I'm afraid I can not," replied the guide, continuing to hold back his horse until he now was at least a length behind his companion. "My horse is cowardly, and becomes unmanageable in a thunder-storm. If you go on, though, I think I can make him follow close enough to point out the road."

The stranger pulled up instantly. A strange light gleamed in his eyes, while his hand sought his breast-pocket, from which he drew something. The guide saw the movement and stopped also.

"Guides should lead, not follow," said the stranger, quietly, but firmly.

"But," faltered the guide, "my horse won't go."

"Won't he?" queried the stranger, with mock simplicity in his tone.

The guide heard a sharp click, and saw something gleam in his companion's right hand. He seemed to understand what it meant perfectly, for he immediately drove his spurs into his horse's flanks and disappeared as though he had vanished through the thick foliage of the trees skirting the road. The stranger dashed up to the spot and saw that his guide had turned down a narrow lane leading into the heart of the wood.

The stranger's horse being much superior, he soon checked the guide by a heavy hand laid upon his bridle, stopping him instantly.

He turned in his seat, beheld the stranger's face, dark and frowning, and trembled violently as he felt the smooth, cold barrel of a pistol pressed against his cheek.

"This cursed beast almost ran away with me," cried the guide.

"Yes, I know," said his companion, dryly, "but mark my words, young man: if your horse plays such tricks again, he'll be the means of seriously injuring his master's health."

They both turned and cantered back to the road. When they reached it again, and turned the heads of their animals in the right direction, the stranger said to his guide, in a tone which must have convinced his hearer as to his earnestness:

"Now, friend Wilhelm, I hope we understand each other for the rest of this journey. You are to continue on ahead of me, in the right road, without swerving either to the right or to the left; if I see you do anything suspicious, I will drive a brace of bullets through you without another word of notice; now push on."

The guide started on as directed, but evidently alarmed at something else besides the action of his follower.

For about a mile the two horsemen rode on in silence, the guide keeping up his directions to the letter, while his follower watched his every movement as a cat would watch a mouse.

Suddenly the guide stopped and looked behind. Again he heard the click of the stranger's pistol, and saw his uplifted arm.

"Have mercy, meinheer," he groaned; "I dare not go on."

"I give you three seconds to go on," replied the stranger, sternly. "One—"

"In heaven's name, spare," implored the guide, almost overpowered with fear; "look before me in the road and you will not blame me."

The stranger looked. At first he saw something white standing motionless in the center of the road, but presently a flash of lightning lit up the scene, and he saw that the white figure was, indeed, ghastly and frightful-looking enough to chill the blood in the veins of even the bravest man. The next instant he set his teeth hard, while he whispered between them, just loud enough to be heard by his terror-stricken guide:

"Be it man or demon, ride it down—I'll follow, two!"

With a cry of despair upon his lips, the guide urged his horse forward at the top of his speed, quickly followed by the stranger, who held his pistol ready in his hand.

In another second the guide would have swept by the dreaded spot, but at that instant the report of a pistol rang through the forest, and the stranger heard a horse gallop off through the wood riderless.

Finding himself alone, the stranger raised his pistol, took deliberate aim at the ghostly murderer, and pressed his finger upon the trigger.

The apparition approached quickly, but in no hostile attitude. The stranger stayed his hand. At length the ghost addressed him in a voice that was anything but sepulchral:

"Here, Wilhelm, ye mope, out of your perch this minute and give me a helping hand. I've hit the game while on the wing, haven't I?"

The stranger was nonplussed for a moment, but, recovering himself, he grumbled something unintelligible and leaped to the ground. One word to his horse, and the brave animal stood perfectly still. By the snow-white trappings on the would-be ghost, he was next enabled to grope his way in the dark toward that individual, whom he found bending over a black mass about the size of a man on the road.

As the tiger pounced upon his prey, the stranger leaped upon the stooping figure before him and bore him to the ground.

"I arrest you in the King's name!" cried the stranger, grasping his prisoner by the throat and holding him tight. "Stir hand or foot until I have you properly secured, and I'll send your soul to eternity."

The would-be ghost was hand-cuffed and stripped of his dagger and pistol before he found breath to speak.

"Are you my Wilhelm?" he at length gasped.

"No, landlord, I'm not. But I'm an officer of the King, on special duty to do what I have to-night accomplished. Your precious son, Wilhelm, lies there in the road, killed by his father's hand."

Two weeks later, at Bruchsale prison, in Baden, the landlord of the "Sign of the Deer," and the "Ghost Robber of the Black Forest," who was the same identical person, having been proven guilty of numerous fiendish murders and artfully contrived robberies, committed at different times in the Black Forest, paid the penalty of his crimes.

Coal Mining in Ireland.

[Pall Mall Gazette.]

Coal mining appears to have been practiced in Ireland in very ancient times. The Ballycastle Collieries are evidently of great antiquity. In 1770 the miners at work there discovered a long gallery cut in the rock, out of which branched many chambers driven into the bed of coal. Here were found the remains of tools and implements used in mining, but in such a decayed state that on being touched they fell to pieces. In early days State protection on a limited scale seems to have been extended to Irish coal operations. We find Swift in the letters from which we have already quoted drawing the attention of "a very worthy member of Parliament" (the Irish Parliament) to this circumstance.

"Looking back," he writes, "into the journals of your House last session, and the state of the accounts, I find a considerable sum of money (no less than £4,000) allowed for the encouragement of Irish coal—i. e. for laying in a sufficient stock of our own coal to lower the extravagant price of the Whitehaven coal, which cost no less than 30s. per ton the last winter, when the Irish (Ballycastle) coals were sold at 14s. and 15s. per ton." This fund, however, must have been shamefully mismanaged, for the Dean of St. Patrick's goes on to say that "when the city was starving for want of coals, there was not one barrel of Irish coal to be had at any rate, and for want of a stock the Whitehaven colliers imposed upon us what rates they pleased."

In the present day much the same apathy is displayed in coal-mining operations in Ireland. Some slight improvement has been apparent during the last few years, there being now fifty-one collieries at work as compared with thirty-four in 1867, with a corresponding increase of produce. The actual output now, however, is under 150,000 tons, of which but 15,000 tons, from Ulster and Connaught, are of flaming coal. The annual import from England and Wales—chiefly now from the Principality—exceeds 2,000,000 tons in weight, which are consumed in manufactures or by the inhabitants of such large towns as Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick, etc., and by the country gentlemen, many of whom in days gone by were satisfied to burn turf. Besides the bituminous coal mined in the counties north of Dublin and the anthracite or "glance" coal of the southern counties, lignite—a species of fuel between coal and wood—is found in considerable quantities in the County of Antrim, and has been worked in years such as the present, when turf has failed and coal has been selling at a very high price. It is important to notice that the fire-damp is unknown in Irish collieries.

Hunting Wild Geese with Oxen.

Shooting wild geese was, in the early days of California, an important industry with those men who hunted for the market, and was very attractive to the few amateurs that indulged in the sport. In those days goose shooting was a profitable business for the hunter, and it was no uncommon thing for the skillful one to make from $100 to $150 a day, even when he obtained but four or five shots (a shot in hunter's parlance meaning the discharge of both barrels).

The system pursued by the market hunters in shooting the geese was as follows: A docile ox was generally selected by the hunter for his attendant. Then the geese were sought on the large open plains, where they fed all through the day, going to water and returning morning and evening. The hunter marked a flock a half or three-quarters of a mile away and then put his ox in motion, allowing him to feed as he went along, in order to make the geese remain unconscious of the lurking figure that moved behind the ox's body.

Old goose hunters affirm that these oxen seemed to take a delight in assisting the shooter to work up his game. They would approach the geese in an indirect way, never going straight toward them, and apparently feeding as they went along. It is also asserted that the geese used actually to know, after being shot at once or twice, the hunters' oxen. As soon as the hunter got within shot, he discharged both barrels, one at the geese on the ground and the other as they rose, bagging from thirty to sixty geese.

He either rested the gun on the ox's back, or allowed him to pass on, and then raked them with his small cannon. The gun used was generally a six-bore, and never less than four, weighing from fourteen to sixteen pounds, and the charge was from eight to ten drachms of powder and two to three ounces of shot. There were at least half a dozen engaged in this business, whose wealth might be computed at from $40,000 to $50,000, altogether the result of goose hunting.

Is the Eau de Lourdes a Medicine?

[Chambers' Journal.]

When the Custom-house officers at Basle demanded the payment of duty on the first consignment there of some Eau de Lourdes, the importers resisted the demand on the ground that the liquid was not a medicament, but merely water, to which the mystical power of faith alone gave medical properties. The authorities, however, insisted that the intrinsic worth of the water did not in any way concern them; it was sent to Switzerland to be used as other medicines.

Here is another good indorsement of a patent medicine: "Dear Sir: After taking two bottles of your 'Elixir of Life' my wife died. You may send me two more bottles, as I expect to marry again."

NEW YORK GOVERNORS.

Who Have Been the Rulers of the Empire State From the Start.

[New York Graphic.]

Alonzo B. Cornell will, on the 1st day of January next, be inaugurated Governor of the great State of New York. It is an office, it may be said with truth, only second in power and responsibility to that held by the President of the United States. The greatest statesmen have held the reins of government in the Empire State, and in view of the near approach of Governor Cornell's inauguration it may be of interest to review briefly the past. Who have been the Governors of New York?

The first Governor of this State was George Clinton, a hero as well as a soldier, a patriot and a statesman. He was elected six times, successively holding the office eighteen years—a career not since duplicated in the history of any State. John Jay was elected in 1795, and held the office until 1801, when George Clinton was again elected, holding the office three years longer, so that his whole service as Governor covered twenty-one years. On the latter's retirement, in 1804, Morgan Lewis was chosen Chief Magistrate. He was a great man in his day, and distinguished himself both as a soldier, statesman, and Chief Justice of the State.

In 1807 Daniel D. Tompkins succeeded Governor Lewis. He was regarded as an abler man and more of a statesman than his predecessor; had won high rank in Congress and as an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court. He was Governor ten years, resigning after his election to the Vice Presidency. He was succeeded by the Lieutenant Governor, John Taylor, whose term of office expired in 1817. De Witt Clinton came next. He is regarded by historians as one of the greatest men and benefactors that this great State ever produced. He held the office until 1823, being succeeded by Joseph C. Yates. In 1826 Clinton was re-elected. For less than a year, from February 11, 1828, to January 1, 1829. Nathaniel Pitcher, Lieutenant Governor, was acting Governor, when Martin Van Buren (afterward President) was inaugurated. Van Buren resigned his seat in the United States Senate to take the office, showing what value he attached to the Governorship. Lieutenant Governor Enos T. Throop succeeded Van Buren, the latter having been appointed Secretary of State by President Jackson. Throop was elected by the people as Governor in 1830. Next was chosen the greatest statesman the Democracy ever had to boast of—William L. Marcy; then William H. Seward, the foremost of the founders of the Republican party. After Seward, William C. Bourk, an eccentric though positive character, who was succeeded in 1845 by Silas Wright. John Young was elected in 1847, being succeeded in 1849 by one of New York City's most distinguished sons, Hamilton Fish. Washington Hunt, who succeeded Fish in 1851, was the last of the Whig Governors. He was succeeded in 1853 by that distinguished Democrat, Horatio Seymour—the man the Democracy are begging to lead them out of Israel—(who was also chosen Governor in 1862). Myron H. Clark served one term after the expiration of Seymour's first. John A. King also served a term. Then came Morgan, Seymour, Fenton, Hoffman, Dix, Tilden and Robinson. Morgan, Seymour and Fenton had to meet the tremendous responsibilities of war times. They did their work well. Dix instituted reforms for which Tilden and Robinson received much credit. Next will come Alonzo B. Cornell. He may well be proud to have been called upon to fill an office occupied with such distinguished ability by a majority of his distinguished predecessors.

American vs. English Beauty.

[North American Review.]

While the beauty of the English girl may endure longer than that of her American sister, yet American beauty has this sovereign advantage—that it best bears close observation. The English beauty appears best at a distance, and grows homely as we approach her; the typical American beauty appears more attractive near at hand; in her case, nearness brings enchantment. The American face bears the microscope mainly by reason of its delicacy, fineness and nobility of expression, qualities that are only appreciated on nearness of expression.

The ruddiness or freshness, the health-suggesting and health-sustaining face of the English girl seems incomparable when partially veiled, or when a few rods away; but, as she comes nearer, these excelling characteristics retreat behind the irregularities of the skin, the thickness of the lips, the size of the nose, and the observer is mildly stunned by the disappointment at not finding the nimble and automatic play of emotion in the eyes and features without which female beauty must always fall below the line of supreme authority. The English beauties of national and international fame, at whose feet the Empire of Great Britain is now kneeling, are of the American type, and in this country they would be held simply as of average rather than exceptional excellence.

It were well if these two extremes could be united: an American beauty slowly approaching, an English beauty slowly vanishing, present together a picture of human beauty the fairest that could fall on mortal vision. An American lady who unites the American qualities of intellect, of manners, and of physique, and who at one period lived for years in English territory, compresses it all in one sentence: "The English face is molded, the American is chiseled."

Lovers Echoes.

[Providence Journal.]

A pretty bird store and shell store, hundreds of softly-tinted and fantastic-shaped sea-shells, and a thousand hopping, chirping, happy birds, and there enters an amiable young couple from the inland country, who are so absorbed in each other as to be oblivious to the gaze or comments of the world around them. She has upon her innocent head a daisy of a bonnet with daffodil trimmings, and he supports on his head no less an object than the identical Leghorn hat of his father, who is a Justice of the Peace, was married in. She looks at the birds because she is a woman, and he at the shells because he is a man; and by and by he carries a large convoluted shell to where she is, whispers in it, and lays it with loving care against her pink ear, which was so pretty that it seemed a reflection of the shell itself.

She listens, comprehends, blushes fairer than any tinted shell that finds itself cast naked from its bed on the open shore, takes down the shell, replies to the whispered words, and hold it with both hands against the ear of her stalwart lover, and then they both smile, and look ineffable nothings, and turn their heads away. What were those whispered words that lingered, and will linger, in their hearts as long as the murmur dwells in the dainty sea-shell? What were those words that started a song in their souls sweeter than that caroled by any of the song-birds there when beautiful morning waited upon them in purple and gold, and reminded them of their singing with the rustle of its breezes? They were the old, old words that young lips will forever utter—"I love you!"

Seeing a Man Home.

I picked Simmons up pretty near dead drunk, and took him home. When I got to his house, as I thought, I shook him a bit and said:

"Here you are."

"Right," said he, and gave a big bang at the door. Up went a window.

"Who's there?" screamed a woman.

"I have brought the old man home," said I.

"All right," she cried, and came to the door.

She immediately seized hold of Simmons and gave him such a shaking that his teeth seemed to rattle in his head.

"Who are you shaking of?" says he.

"Good gracious!" cried the woman; "that is not my husband's voice."

I struck a match and she found she had been shaking the wrong man.

"There," said the woman ferociously, "I've been sitting up here and expecting my husband home drunk, and now I've waisted my strength on a stranger."

"Don't he live here?" said I.

"No," said the woman, "he don't."

"What made you knock?" said I to Simmons.

"Knock?" said he; "you told me to."

"I thought you lived here," said I.

"Glad I don't," said he.

I suppose he was thinking of the shaking he'd had.

At last I found where he did live, and got him home. Mrs. Simmons was sitting up for him. As soon as ever I knocked, out she came.

"Oh!" says she, "you're the wretch as makes my poor husband drunk, are you?" and she gave me a slap across the face.

I've never seen a drunken man home since.—[Exchange.